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## UNMASKING TERRORISM

COUNTERING THE THREAT  
OF TERRORISM

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European Community nations aren't selling any more surplus butter to Libya.

Business executives abroad are turning in their highly visible limousines for modest sedans. Engineers in Massachusetts are devel-

oping a "sniffer" that can detect even the tiniest scent of explosives. United States Army bases in Germany are being guarded against intruders by loud-honking geese.

In these and other ways, Western nations are learning to counter the threat of international terrorism.

But terrorist attacks are on the rise worldwide. And few terrorists have been brought to justice. A report from the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University in Israel notes that terrorists were captured or killed in action in only about 1 of every 10 incidents in 1984.

Authorities on terrorism generally reject the notion that terrorism can be wiped out entirely. For the immediate future, they see it as a problem to be managed, not solved. But they insist that much more can be done to control it.

From scores of interviews with terrorist experts in recent months, the following broad conclusions emerge about countering terrorism:

**Diplomatic measures**

"The single most important step," says Italian authority Franco Ferracuti, "is international cooperation." But such cooperation is difficult, he cautions, because nations have different traditions, laws, and economies. Intelligence services hesitate to share information, fearing leaks abroad. Courts are concerned that extradition could help bring a foreign government's political enemies home for punishment. Politicians fear that sanctions against nations backing terrorism could disadvantage their own economies.

There are differences, too, in the definition of terrorism. European nations, with a history of domestic terrorism, tend to see it as a criminal problem. But Israel, which is at war with its Arab neighbors, sees it as a form of warfare demanding a military response — a view increasingly prevalent in America.

An international consensus is growing, however, about ways to deal with the problem. For example: the six-point statement issued earlier this month by the heads of the seven industrial nations at the Tokyo summit. Galvanized by the US bombing of Libya April 15 and the European Community decision April 21 to impose sanctions against Libya, summit leaders agreed to ban arms sales to terrorist-sponsoring nations, deny entry to suspected terrorists, improve extradition procedures, impose tougher immigration and visa requirements, and improve cooperation among security organizations.

They also agreed to impose size limits on diplomatic staffs from offending nations. Since the US bombing of

Libya, Libyans have been expelled from Britain, West Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg.

Experts, in fact, pinpoint embassies and consulates as an essential link in the terrorism support system. "The European Community generally has been far too weak in using its rights under the Vienna Convention," says Paul Wilkinson of the University of Aberdeen.

That convention, dating from 1815, establishes rules concerning diplomatic immunity and the diplomatic pouch. Under those protections, Libya, Iran, Syria, and other terrorist-sponsoring nations have harbored terrorists, stored and transported weapons, provided false documents, and operated networks of agents ready to commit terrorist acts within a host country. There are increasing calls for rethinking these provisions.

**Intelligence gathering**

"The only effective way of beating terrorist activities," says Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) assistant director Oliver (Buck) Revell, "is to have intelligence on their operations, their organizations, their membership, their motives, their philosophies, their ideology."

The word intelligence, however, is an umbrella for everything from a whispered comment to a super-computer.

It covers an informer's tip in September 1984 that the Valhalla, a 77-foot trawler, would shortly leave Boston carrying seven tons of arms destined for Irish Republican Army (IRA) terrorists. It also covers the US spy satellites and British Royal Air Force Nimrod aircraft that tracked the ship and the transfer of arms to an Irish boat, the Marita Ann, before the Irish Navy made the interception.

Most observers agree that effective counterterrorism requires human intelligence gathering — and that overemphasis on electronic means has hampered efforts to build an effective network of human agents. Because of emphasis on the use of computers, says Reinhard Rupprecht of West Germany's Ministry of the Interior, "we are in danger of neglecting the police on the beat."

But since terrorist organizations tend to be small and highly secretive, some of the best leads come from the simplest measures. "You pay a lot of little ladies to keep their ears and eyes open [and] to send you information," says former Central Intelligence Agency chief Stansfield Turner. "The false alarm rate will be tremendous," he adds. "Hopefully, we're skilled in sifting data."

Some of that sifting is now being done through Interpol, whose central computer facility in Paris is proving useful in tracking the movements of terrorists and weapons.

**Security measures**

From his office in Rome, Judge Rosario Priore can look out his window at the Tiber River — through